

August 4, 1967

Eunice Kennedy Shriver  
The Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation  
Suite 510  
719 Thirteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mrs. Shriver:

We are proud, too, of our association with the Kennedy Foundation and lose no opportunity that turns up to make note of it. We will continue to do this but it is a little difficult sometimes to be sure that affiliation with the foundation is not overlooked, particularly when other people report our work and sometimes perhaps even in some of our own activities. But I can assure you that we are right with you in our motivation to credit the foundation and ourselves with a very productive association.

We do have a very handsome bronze plaque that refers to your late brother at the main entryway into the laboratories. I will make a point of sending you a picture of it just in case you don't have one already. There are smaller plaques at other entrances and on some of the hallways. We do not however have a picture and if you will send me one, I will be very happy to see that it is mounted and displayed in an appropriately dignified but prominent place.

The most important work going on in research connectgd with mental retardation here has been summarized by Dr. McKhann and Dr. Shooter in reports to the foundation headquarters. There is an enormous amount of work, which may seem like drudge work, connected with these fundamental studies but they are the surest way to the deepest understanding of brain chemistry and its deviations. If you have any questions about any of the matters brought up in these formal reports and would like to discuss them with me or with either of them informally we would, of course, be delighted to do so - perhaps best of all if you have the occasion for a more leisurely conversation during a visit to the laboratories.

Kennedy  
SHRIVER

E. Shriver

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Alternatively, I might try to meet you in Washington on my next trip there, which may be either in September or November. I did try to contact your husband when I was in Washington last Spring but, as I hardly need to repeat, he is a very hard man to get hold of and he has more important preoccupations with Congress and his office.

The laboratories have worked out very beautifully; we have a vigorous research program; we are working on a very broad front.

I think it will not have escaped you that I use my column in the Washington Post quite consistently to get over some of the complexities of human development as an inescapably important premise of political action in a large number of fields. The more I read and observe on the matter, the more impressed I am with the great importance of motivational maturation in the development of what we call "intelligence" and what an important element this must be, particularly in the de facto retardation of so many negro children. But what a difficult subject to study with scientific objectivity! In case you missed them, I am enclosing a couple of my columns that might be of closer pertinence to problems of mental retardation and mental development. I would be very happy to have any comments you care to make on them.

Yours Sincerely,

  
Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

Encls.

JL/gem